

Human Services Funding Committee / Community Development Committee (CDC)
Minutes
December 11, 2007

Members Attending: Claude Tellier, Tamara Rutland – Mills, Mary Jane Laus, Paulette Brooks, Isaac Ben Ezra
Town Staff: Roy Rosenblatt
Absent: Jana McClure

The meeting of the Community Development Committee met in Room 201 of the Bangs Center beginning at 7:05 p.m. The committee discussed ideas for the Community Development Block Grant 2008 Request for Proposals. The CDBG application is due February 15, 2008.

- North Amherst School is a historic building and its use supports low/moderate income residents through Head Start and the Survival Center. The Survival Center, Town Manager and Select Board met and discussed a feasibility study for alternate location possibilities for the Survival Center and/or future use of the building. Also, Mr. Rosenblatt will gather a quote for Capital repairs to maintain the North Amherst School. Capital repairs to this building could be a viable option to include in the grant application for this year.
- A social worker for the Survival Center to target the homelessness problem, and emergency services. This year's CDBG application deadline does not give the committee enough time to propose a shelter for the homeless or SRO possibilities (Single Room Occupancy). Homelessness: To meet the short term need, the Housing Partnership recommends use of CPA funds allocating \$50,000 for vouchers servicing 5 families. The committee inquired whether the Homeless Study Committee issued a report.
- Rolling Green – Mr. Rosenblatt and the Town Manager discussed the possibility of negotiations to deed restrict units for low / moderate income. This would not be a possibility for this year's grant because there is not enough time to work out details before the February application deadline.
- Land on the west side of West Street / Pomerory Lane – 2.2 acres that fits the description of a "Village Center." That the Town could purchase as a build-able lot. This would require a feasibility study. The committee discussed three story buildings with shops below and affordable apartments above. The CDBG funds of \$750,000 would not be enough, therefore the committee discussed CPA funds as an alternate source.
- Long term planning possibility - Mr. Ben Ezra proposed the possibility of low income housing above store front units. Low to moderate income housing could be discussed with Amherst College and their contractor providing construction along South East Street. The contemplated expansion on Spring Street near the Lord Jeffery Inn has received zoning change. By adding affordable housing, the developer would possibly be eligible for tax credits and/or low income loan rates.

Mr. Rosenblatt will advertise the RFP (Request for Proposals) for Town Funds designated for Social Services. These will be due Mid January, beginning of February, 2008 and the Committee will read the proposals after they are gathered. The committee speculated that town would level fund the social services – maintaining last years 50% cut. The Select Board has designated the homelessness issue as a priority to fund. The committee discussed the need to return the funding to \$140,000 with a 3% increase. The agencies were not able to articulate the loss of services the cut in funding created last year. The committee discussed the difficulty in measuring impact.

The next meeting of the Community Development Committee will meet on Monday, December 17, 2007 at 7 p.m. to discuss the CDBG Proposals submitted for review. Two Proposals for the social service component of the funding were submitted for the committee's review - The Survival Center through Service Net and CHD.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paulette Brooks